

on the fifteenth. Kutusoff's men were so weary that they could proceed no farther without a rest, and from Schratenthal he sent back a subordinate, Bagration, to Hollabrunn, with six thousand of the freshest troops, to check the French advance, if possible. Believing the main army of Kutusoff to be before him, the French leader felt unable to engage. Accordingly he despatched a messenger under a flag of truce with the statement, purely fictitious, though speciously based on certain irrelevant facts, that negotiations had been opened for a general armistice. Kutusoff, pretending to be familiar with the details of the falsehood, heartily entered into a proposition to negotiate, using the time thus gained to prepare his further retreat. A paper was duly drawn up, signed, and sent to Napoleon at Schonbrunn, where the bearer arrived on the sixteenth. The Emperor, seeing how Murat had been outwitted, immediately sent off an adjutant to him with peremptory orders to attack at once. When this command arrived at Hollabrunn, Soult had come in with three divisions, but Kutusoff with his army was far away on the highroad to Znaim. Murat fought bravely, but Bagration's vastly inferior force resisted with equal stubbornness until eleven at night, when, their purpose of gaining time having been accomplished, they followed the main army. Napoleon had by this time come up to take charge in person, but it was too late: Murat had "destroyed the fruits of a campaign." Near Briinn, Kutusoff met the Vienna garrison, and at Wischau the united force of forty-five thousand men joined the first detachment, fourteen thousand strong, of a second Russian army, which was advancing under Buxhowden. The second detachment of this army, ten thousand strong, was found next day, November twentieth, at Prossnitz. The great fortress of Olmiitz was just beyond, with a